

The Voice of the Suffering Saviour

Psalm 22

(The following is the substance of an address given by David Silversides in London on 11th June 1996.)

Psalm 22:1 reads, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?” No doubt most of us are aware that the first part of these words of verse 1 were spoken by the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, during the three hours of darkness upon the cross. When we consider those words and our Saviour’s utterance of them upon the cross, they immediately make us aware that we are looking at something that is profound, so profound that even when we have explored these words, we come back to them again and again in our Christian life because we never feel that we have fully understood or plummed the depths of meaning behind these words. These words speak of something that fascinates unfallen angels. They speak of the sufferings of Christ at their most intense and most profound. These words speak of things that unfallen angels and redeemed men will be astonished at and will wonder at forever and ever yet these things are written for our learning. We are meant to study these things and to seek as far as possible by the grace of God to enter into what the Lord Jesus was expressing in these words.

What is the occasion of this Psalm? How did this Psalm come to be written? Some of the Psalms are directly

messianic, that is, they speak solely and simply of the Lord Jesus Christ. The most obvious example is Psalm 110 where David speaks of 'his Lord.' He speaks directly of the Lord Jesus, "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand." Other Psalms are not quite like that in that the Psalmist, David, speaks in his own person. In God's providence how was it, then, that this Psalm was brought about under the inspiration of the Spirit? What exactly are we to make of it that David appears to write of himself and yet several verses of this Psalm we know are either uttered by Christ or are referred to Christ in the New Testament Scriptures?

In order to understand this, I believe we must remember what the Apostle Paul says in Philippians 3:10 where he speaks of 'the fellowship of his sufferings'. By the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, he means that whilst Christ's sufferings are utterly unique and exclusive as atonement for sin, there is some kind of connection between the sufferings of Christ and the sufferings of his people. Christ suffered at the hands of the wicked. Christ suffered in the interests of his people when he died for their sins. The Apostle Paul suffered for righteousness' sake because the servant is not above his master. The Lord Jesus said, "If they have hated me, they will hate you also."

The Apostle Paul suffered in the interests of the church of God. In 2 Timothy 2:10 he says, "I endure all things for the elect's sake." In Colossians 1:24, he uses what at first is a quite startling expression, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the

afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." What does the apostle mean there? Clearly he does not mean that his sufferings had any part in the atonement for sin. Christ and Christ only atoned for the sins of men. But what he does mean is that his sufferings for righteousness' sake also have an instrumental part in the application of redemption to the elect of God. He suffered particularly as a Christian and in his case as a preacher of the Gospel. His sufferings in the providence of God and the truth he bore testimony to in the midst of suffering, was instrumental in God's providence in the application of the benefits that Christ has purchased to his people, his elect.

So the apostle suffered for righteousness' sake though not perfectly as Christ did. He also suffered in the interests and for the good of the church of God. The Lord Jesus Christ suffered for sin whereas the sufferings of God's people are instrumental in their dying to sin. Christ died for sin and that is why he suffered. Our sufferings, if we are Christians, are part of God's providential dealings with us in the full sense of sanctification so that we die to sin. So there is another connection between Christ's sufferings and the sufferings of God's people and that is why the apostle in Philippians 3:10 says that he desired to be conformable unto his death.

So there are these connections between the sufferings of God's people and the sufferings of Christ. They are for righteousness' sake. They are in the interests of the rest of the body of Christ and they also have in view the ultimate sanctification of the people of God. That is true

of believers in the New Testament. It is also true of believers in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, believers suffered for righteousness' sake. In the Old Testament, believers suffered often in the interests of the people of God. In the Old Testament, they suffered as part of God's plan for their sanctification, that they should die to sin, and so the Old Testament saints also knew the fellowship of Christ's sufferings.

This is perhaps best illustrated in the life of Joseph. Joseph suffered. He suffered for righteousness' sake because he told the truth of God. Joseph suffered in the interests of the church of God in the preservation of the house of Jacob and of the promise concerning the Redeemer that was to be fulfilled through the house of Jacob. Also, his sufferings had in view his own holiness as he was tried in the prison after being put there by Potiphar. So we can say that Joseph's sufferings had this in common with Christ's: that he suffered for righteousness' sake; he suffered in the interests of the church of God; and he suffered with a view to the ultimate purification of his own soul.

This is true also of David. It is true of all the people of God. That hostility between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent comes to expression in Christ supremely but also in his people in all ages both before and after Christ's first coming. So it was true of David that he knew the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and yet in David's case, there was something more. David was evidently intended to be a distinct type of the Lord Jesus Christ as the King in Zion, and that of his seed the Saviour

would come. So David, in common with all God's people, knew the fellowship of Christ's sufferings but as a type of Christ and the one through whom as the son of David the Redeemer would come, his suffering for righteousness' sake, his fellowship of Christ's sufferings, was God's ordained occasion of prophecy concerning the sufferings of the son of David, the Saviour who was yet to come. The spirit of prophecy takes David in the midst of his sufferings and causes him to speak far beyond his own fellowship of Christ's sufferings to speak of the Saviour's sufferings yet to take place. I believe that is the occasion of the prophecy. As David suffered and as he knew something of the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, the Christ who was yet to come, the spirit of prophecy caused him to write not only of himself but of the Saviour who was to come in the appointed time. So this we believe is something of the manner in which this Psalm of the sufferings of Christ was given.

The title says, "To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David." Aijeleth Shahar means the hind of the morning. Some take it to be a musical instruction, but rather I think we should take it as the theme of the Psalm. David was pursued by Saul and his men like a hind chased by wild beasts referred to in the Psalm – the bulls of Bashan and the dogs and the lions ravaging for their prey. These things certainly are compatible with David being pursued but there is more than that – there is the Lord Jesus Christ being brought down to death at the hands of the wicked. That is the supreme reference of these verses. Just like a hind

surrounded by bulls and by lions and by dogs, so the Lord Jesus was surrounded by the assembly of the wicked who desired to tear him to pieces.

The awesome physical sufferings of the Lord Jesus are prophesied in this Psalm. You see that in verse 14 to 18 “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.”

Here we have the awesome physical sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. However terrible the physical sufferings were, they do not explain the horror with which the Lord Jesus viewed the cross in the garden of Gethsemane. The physical sufferings of Christ were indeed great but on their own they do not explain the agony in Gethsemane as he sweat great drops of blood. We read that he was ‘sore amazed and very heavy’ so much so that we read that there appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him, Luke 22:43. Now the angels do not strengthen the soul, they strengthened his body because the prospect of what lay before him was so awesome that the Lord Jesus, without this strengthening of the angel upon his physical frame, would have been crushed and brought to physical death prematurely. So he was strengthened by the angel in order to suffer. His

physical frame was strengthened so as to be able to bear what no other man has ever borne in this world.

The physical sufferings cannot be the full picture and cannot be even the main part of the sufferings of Christ. Mere men, especially believing men and women, have faced horrendous physical suffering without the kind of agony that the Lord Jesus exhibited in the garden of Gethsemane. The saints of God have faced torture and death with rejoicing and without this anguish, and the servant is not superior to the Master. So there must be something more, something far beyond the physical sufferings of Christ, great though they were, that put his sufferings in a unique, an utterly unequal category as far as this world is concerned.

The fullest weight of Christ's sufferings were the sufferings of his soul. Christ was a divine person but he suffered in his human nature in its entirety, in his body and in his soul. The sufferings that he endured in his soul are the far greater part of his sufferings, even though we find that difficult to comprehend. We think of his physical sufferings and we are astonished but the far greater weight of his suffering was unseen in his soul.

His soul was afflicted just as his body was afflicted because he was bearing alone the wrath of God upon sin. The means by which he suffered were various. Of course, men afflicted him physically in the providence of God but what men did, did certainly afflict his soul. He suffered in his soul as the result of human actions. The desertion of his friends hurt the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no question

of that. The reproaches of his enemies hurt the Lord Jesus Christ, "Reproach hath broken in my heart."

When his enemies blasphemed him and reproached him in all offices of prophet, priest and king, it afflicted the Lord Jesus. They reproached his prophetic office: they smote him when he was blindfolded and said, "Prophecy thou unto us who smote thee, thou Christ?" They despised, they ridiculed his prophetic office. They ridiculed his kingly office. His kingly office was denied by the Jews. It was mocked by Herod and his men of war. It was parodied by Pilate and his men to insult the Jews. They gave him a reed as a sceptre and a crown of thorns upon his head, and then Pilate put the superscription over the cross, "The King of the Jews." He used the kingship of the Lord Jesus which he despised, as a way of venting his spite for the Jews. He said, "There is your King." He used two criminals to act as attendants, crucifying them on either side of the Lord Jesus so as to reproach the Jews and say, "Look, look at your King." They said, "He is not our king," but he said, "Look, this is the King of the Jews." The Jews, Herod, Pilate, the soldiers, all in different ways mocked the kingship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

They mocked his priesthood. The Lord Jesus was the great High Priest offering himself but they ignored his priesthood. They treated it as non-existent. They assumed that his sufferings were entirely involuntary. So in verse 8 of our Psalm, "He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he

delighted in him.” The assumption is he is suffering because he is helpless. He is not a High Priest offering himself, he is a helpless man. They despised his priesthood. And the thief next to him said, "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us!"

So they mocked his prophet, priest and kingly offices. All of this wickedness afflicted the perfectly pure, sinless, holy soul of God Incarnate. We read of Lot who was far from perfect, a very poor specimen of a believer, that his righteous soul was vexed from day to day by the filthy conversation of the wicked. If Lot was vexed by the wickedness of Sodom, what did it mean to the spotless Son of Man that his offices and his Christhood and God, the Father who sent him, were reproached and ridiculed by all around him? We cannot comprehend, we cannot enter into the full extent of what that did to the Lord Jesus, of the affliction that it entailed, because we are not perfectly pure and perfectly holy. We are not afflicted as we ought to be when we hear the name of God blasphemed because we do not love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. But the Lord Jesus was spotless.

His human soul was without any sin and all of this wickedness was around him. Nothing around the Lord Jesus offered any consolation to him. The first verse of this Psalm was found on his lips as the climax, as indicating even something beyond all of this. There was the physical suffering, there was that suffering to his soul

that came through human instrumentality and wickedness, but there's something even more here.

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

1. This cry expressed a real feeling and a real forsaking.

It expressed a real feeling. Mark's Gospel tells us, chapter 15, verse 34, that he "cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" He summoned his strength to cry out, showing that these words expressed an immense inner anguish which had to be expressed. Even though physical strength was ebbing away, it had to be summoned to express this anguish. What is more, we find that in Mark's Gospel the words are given not exactly in the Hebrew but in the Aramaic. Aramaic is a variation on Hebrew and there is a slight difference, not in meaning but in the language used. The Lord Jesus is not reciting a text. We say he quoted these words, yes, but not exactly. He uttered these words but he used his natural tongue. He used the Aramaic because it is not just a recital of these words. He is not in that sense just quoting them; he takes them up upon his lips because they express a reality within.

These words expressed a real feeling and they expressed a real forsaking, not an imaginary one. He is not simply giving rhetorical expression to something, nor is he expressing a false impression. There was a forsaking. There is no untruth in these words. They express something that is real, a real feeling based on a real fact. There was some action of the Father involved here that

could be described as a forsaking. It is not just an appearance, it is a real thing.

Now what is it not, first of all? This forsaking was not a breaking up of the two natures of Christ. He was and continues to be God and man in two distinct natures and one person forever. He was that even now. There was no breaking up of the person of Christ, no disjunction of the person of Christ and the two natures in one person. It is a divine person suffering in a human nature. Even now, having become a man without ceasing to be God, he was and always will be God and man in two distinct natures in one person forever. There is something marvellous in that, that redemption accomplished entailed the second person of the Godhead becoming a man and that will never be reversed. The Son of God will always have two natures forever – the magnitude of redemption accomplished!

Then we can say that it is not that the Father ceased to love the Son. There was no introduction of disharmony, in that sense, within the Trinity, within the Godhead. It could not be so. It could not be so that the Father could cease to love the Son, nor could it be that the soul of Christ would cease to be kept perfect by the power of God. That is not the answer.

Well, what is it, then? This forsaking was the removal of all the comforting work of the Holy Spirit upon the human soul of the Lord Jesus. Let us try to understand that. Let us begin with the people of God. The people of God delight in some measure in God. The people of God know

something of joy and peace in believing. They know something of joy in the Holy Ghost, though the extent varies considerably. They know something of enjoying God, but not always. There is variation in our joys in God. God hides his face. David experienced this in verse 2, "O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent." Believers know something of the joy of God but they also experience the loss of it, or the diminishing of it. "Thou hidest thy face and we are troubled," Psalm 30:7. When the Beloved withdraws himself, the bride laments, "My soul failed when he spake. I sought him but I could not find him. I called him but he gave me no answer," Song of Solomon 5:6. "Oh that I knew where I might find him!" Job 23:3. The believer knows something of that. He knows joy in God but he knows also a sense of having lost some measure, sometimes a considerable measure, of that joy. Those who love God feel the pain of his felt absence.

No one ever found his joy in God as Christ did. The Psalmist Asaph says, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is not upon earth that I desire beside thee." That was supremely true of the Lord Jesus Christ. His joy in his human soul was in God. We always have some fascination with the creature that belongs to the Creator who is God over all and blessed forever, but Christ never did. Christ never enjoyed anything in independence or in isolation from God for his joy was related to his Father. He enjoyed nothing without reference to him. All the joys of his soul were joys of the Spirit and the joys of the Spirit were withdrawn not in measure, as with us for our

chastening and correction, but totally, utterly as one accursed. What must it have meant for a perfectly holy soul whose joy was all was in God to be utterly destitute of the comforts and joys of the Spirit? Here is something that we cannot comprehend in the immensity of the suffering entailed.

2. It is a cry of conscious innocence.

"Why hast thou forsaken me?" The lost in hell will not ask why but Christ is suffering the pains of hell, the utter absence of the sense of God's favour in the full knowledge of his own personal innocence and so he says, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Was this question just for effect? No, it was not. Did he not know that he was the Mediator bearing the sins of many? Yes, he did. I want to explain this carefully because it needs great care: there is nothing incompatible with Christ's full Deity, his infallibility, his perfection, to say that he engaged in mental struggle in his human consciousness, and that he engaged in sinless thought processes in his human consciousness, thought processes entirely compatible with utter belief of all that God had said. This cry involves a profession of conscious innocence. "Why hast thou forsaken me?" It is a sinless question expressing conscious innocence.

3. This cry is a cry of perfect holiness under wrath.

"My God, my God." Job said, "Thou he slay me, yet will I trust in him." God slew the Lord Jesus in a way that he never did to Job. God poured out his wrath without

mixture. No one on this side of the grave, no one in this present world has ever suffered what Christ suffered. No one has suffered the unmixed full wages of sin in this world but Christ. There are only two places where God pours out the full measure of that wrath and judgment which sin deserves: one is hell and the other is the cross of Calvary.

As far as this world is concerned, what we have here is a suffering that is utterly unique. In Israel, the body of a criminal, an evildoer who had been put to death, could be hanged on a tree. It was written, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." That hanging of the body on a tree was an indication that man having done all that he could, having destroyed the body after which there is nothing more that he can do, handed over the evildoer to the curse of God. Having done that which was the responsibility of man to do under God in killing the body, he was hanged on a tree to show that they had done what God required of them and he was committed now to the direct justice of God as a curse.

But the Lord Jesus was hanged on a tree while he was still in this life because he was bearing the full curse of God this side of the grave. That is why we say no one has ever suffered as Christ did in this world. All the miseries of this life do not compare with the pains of hell and it was the pains of hell, the full wages of sin that Christ bore on the cross. But as he suffers the wrath of God in its full flood, he still looks Godward. He says, "My God, my God." He still loves God perfectly. He still loves this God, this angry God, this thrusting away God, this God of wrath whose

judgment is being poured out upon him as the Redeemer of God's elect. He still loves him utterly, absolutely, perfectly, sinlessly.

This divine person in his human nature sustained all the obligation of man to God, to love God with all his heart and soul and mind and strength, and he still does even now. He says, "My God, my God." He does not look for some creature comfort. He still is utterly committed to loving God, the God whose wrath he has borne.

I once heard of a Dutch church in the past that used to ask its candidates for the ministry this question, "Are you willing to be damned to the glory of God?" The consciences of imperfect Christians cannot really be expected to cope with such a question. It is not a choice we have to make. Those who care about God's glory will never be damned because it is only the people of God, the redeemed, who do care about the glory of God. But the Lord Jesus Christ did submit to being damned to the glory of God. He fulfilled the Father's will in being damned in the place of sinners and still his perfect, holy soul is directed towards God. Though he can find no comfort in God, he remembers God and is troubled yet he believes God. He will not seek solace in the creature independently of God. Only sinners seek solace in the creature rather than the Creator. So God the Father, who is damning him, is the one he supremely loves even yet. Even in his terrors he acknowledges God as the billows of his wrath come over him as they never did to David. He thinks of God.

4. It is a cry of Abraham's truest Seed.

"My God, my God." This is the language of the covenant, "My God." God promised to Abraham, "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." God was the God of Abraham. He was a God of all the believing descendants of Abraham. He is the God of believing Gentiles also. The many were blessed in the one, the Lord Jesus Christ. That is how he was Abraham's God. That is how he was Isaac's God. That is how he was Jacob's God. The many were blessed in the one. It is in Christ that God was their God. They were brought to faith in the coming Redeemer and God was their God. Then as we move into the New Testament and the Gentile branches are grafted in, God is their God through Christ Jesus. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise," Galatians 3:29. And yet here is the truest Israelite of all. Here is the great keeper of the covenant of life. Here is the one of whom it was prophesied, "Behold, my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." Here is the one who had the testimony from heaven, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased." This is the seed, the one who in himself has the right to say, "My God."

Verses 9 and 10 are supremely true of Christ: "But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly." This Lord Jesus is the one who in himself had the basis for saying, "My God." He is the one who not

long before his crucifixion had said at the grave of Lazarus, "I know that thou hearest me always." But not now, verse 2, "O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent."

David knew something of a chastening for sin but this goes far beyond David to the son of David. "O my God, I cry but thou hearest not." Had he not just said, "Thou hearest me always"? "Thou hearest not." The great covenant-keeper says, "Thou hearest not. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The one who had the right to say, "My God," is saying, "I'm forsaken."

The Lord Jesus Christ is the covenant head, the representative of his people. In Romans 5 Adam and Christ are put in parallel, "as by the offence of one many were made sinners, even so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." He perfectly fulfilled all the obligations of the covenant of life on behalf of his people but the Father treats him as the great apostate. He treats him as worse than Ishmael or Esau. He treats him as the great excommunicant, the one cast out of the gates, not just by men but by the providence of God. He is accursed, stricken of God and afflicted. He is being treated as the absolute covenant-breaker. He is being treated as no imperfect believer in Israel was ever treated.

Look at verse 3, "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded." He is talking about the fathers who

believed, the godly fathers, who were still sinners but here is the sinless Lord Jesus, the truest seed of Abraham that there could ever be and he says, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

We have here also a perfect craving totally denied, a craving for covenant fellowship, "My God, my God," which for the people of God receives the response from God, "My people." But not here. A perfect craving for covenant fellowship with God utterly denied. "Thou didst not answer."

5. It is a cry that will have a glorious outcome.

It is a cry that is having and will have a glorious outcome. Verse 22 to the end of the Psalm speaks of this. Verse 22, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." David would declare God's deliverance to the church of his day but as the Lord's anointed in Israel, he pointed to him that was to come, the Anointed, the Messiah, the Christ, who will cause the whole church of God, all of God's elect to hear of the deliverance that he has wrought for them. Hebrews 2:12 speaks of this and quotes this verse. Reading from verse 11, "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." David spoke of deliverance in the church of his day but Christ brings the tidings of the great salvation by the Spirit, through his servants, to all the elect of God.

Then verse 23, “Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel. For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.” David was delivered from death. The Lord Jesus could not be held of death. He was raised from the dead.

Verses 25 and 26, “My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him. The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.” David could eat the thank offering with the poor and needy in the course of the law. That is the reference here, the thank offering which was eaten by the offerer and those who were with him, but this is pointing beyond that to all the blessings of salvation in Christ. The meek will partake of them and live forever. All the blessings of salvation are received by the people of God. They are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. They have life everlasting. That is the picture here of the thank offering, the partaking of which was for the meek. It is speaking of Christ bestowing the benefits of salvation purchased by him upon all the people of God. All their spiritual food and nourishment and salvation is in Christ.

Verses 27-31, “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the LORD’S: and he is the governor among the nations. All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go

down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul. A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.”

“All nations” – the church, will become international, and it has already. The fat, the self-sufficient, will be brought to humble trust and dependence upon the Lord Jesus along with the poor and needy who strive to keep themselves alive. They shall be joint heirs in Christ. The Lord's doings, his great deliverance, redemption in Christ, will be declared to future generations and unto a people that shall be born. “That he hath done this” – accomplished redemption. It is this phrase surely that the Lord Jesus took up on the cross when he said, "It is finished! It is done!" So a multitude which no man can number out of all nations and kindreds and tongues and peoples shall be washed in the blood of the Lamb.

If you are a Christian, do you realize why the Lord Jesus cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was so that we could say in truth, "My God." He who had the right to say, "My God," was forsaken of God so that hell-deserving sinners saved by him could say, "My God, my God. Yea, mine own God is he." We are heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. The Lord Jesus after his resurrection said to Mary, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father and to my God and your God." Joint heirs of God with Christ.

What manner of men and women ought we to be in all holiness and godly conversation when we consider these things? What confidence we ought to have. "He that spared not his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not with him also freely give us all things?" *All things*. We sometimes think that God withholds from us things that are for our good. If we are Christians and therefore have a reason to believe that we are of God's elect for whom Christ died, that verse is telling us he spared not his own Son. Do you really imagine that God who spared not his own Son, 'spared' not just in the sense of 'withheld not' but also spared not his Son the full infliction of the demands of justice, will that God who displayed such extravagance of love and grace in the giving of his Son, there could be no greater display of grace and lovingkindness conceivable, will he be tight-fisted with anything, anything that we really need? Do you not see that every time we complain against God, we insult God and we insult his Son Jesus Christ and we are guilty of disbelieving his love displayed in the giving of his Son?

The argument is quite simple: it is from the greatest possible to the lesser. He spared not his own Son. If anything else is in our interests and for our good, he will not withhold that either. The Lord Jesus said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" so that we should be able to say, "My God." It is that glorious privilege of having God as our God that is the theme from Genesis to Revelation. So in Revelation 21:3 we read, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they

shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Then in verse 7, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." And that is because of the cry expressed in this Psalm. Surely his name is wonderful. Amen.